



# Strategic Plan

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## Introduction

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The United States International Trade Commission (Commission) is pleased to present its revised Strategic Plan. The Commission established a Strategic Planning Board in 1994 soon after the enactment of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-62). It developed its first Strategic Plan in 1995, and a second edition in 1997. This third edition demonstrates the evolving nature of strategic planning. While containing many of the provisions of the earlier editions, it revises the Plan to more effectively carry out the purposes of the Results Act. This third edition addresses the period ending September 30, 2003.

The Commission's Strategic Plan (Plan) consists of a mission statement, a vision statement, critical success indicators, strategic goals that will be used to measure our success level, and the general strategies that will be used to achieve the mission. The mission is based on the functions assigned to the Commission by statute, *e.g.*, 19 U.S.C. §§ 1332, 1337, 1484, 1671 *et seq.*, 2151, 2163, 2252, 2436, 2704, 3005, 3007, 3010, and 3204, and a comprehensive review of the Commission's operations. The Commission expects the Strategic Plan to be a living, evolving document that will change as the Commission reevaluates its mission in light of experience and changing external circumstances. Accordingly, the Commission intends to review the Strategic Plan every year and revise it as necessary. The review process was aided by an inspection of the Strategic Plan's goals carried out by the Commission's Inspector General. The Strategic Plan also takes into account comments received during the Commission's consultation with Congress and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). The agency provided copies of the draft plan to the Senate Finance Committee, the Senate Appropriations Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and USTR.

In the coming year, the Commission will reevaluate the Strategic Plan with a view to orienting its goals more toward outcomes and the quality of Commission actions. Based on this third edition of its Strategic Plan, the Commission has issued Performance Plans for Fiscal Years (FY) 1999 and 2000. The Performance Plans are closely linked to the Strategic Plan in that each goal in the Performance Plans corresponds directly to a strategic goal in the Strategic Plan, although each performance goal is geared toward the timeframe of a single fiscal year. The Performance Plans also set out means to measure the Commission's success at meeting its performance goals; those annual measurements of success aim, in the aggregate over the period covered by the Strategic Plan, to indicate the Commission's progress at meeting its strategic goals.

The Plan takes into account the Commission's large and diverse constituency. The agency's direct customers include the President, USTR, and the Congress in that they request and

receive trade policy support, including both analytical reports and trade data. In addition, our customers include domestic industries that petition the Commission to conduct investigations where it has authority delegated by law to do so, and the public that seeks assistance on trade issues. Ultimately, the Commission serves the U.S. taxpayer by assisting in the development and implementation of sound U.S. trade policy. External factors influencing the Commission's success at achieving its goals, and largely outside the Commission's control, include the number and nature of requests and petitions received from its customers, judicial and panel decisions reviewing Commission determinations, and changes in the laws the Commission administers. Although agencies such as the Commerce Department and the Customs Service perform similar functions to those of the Commission in some areas, those functions are by statute distinct and do not significantly overlap.

The Commission has seen its mission expand as a result of legislative changes. Notably, the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) imposed substantial new responsibilities on the Commission with respect to reviewing outstanding antidumping and countervailing duty orders. The URAA imposed detailed and specific requirements concerning the Commission's role in reviewing the approximately 315 outstanding antidumping and countervailing duty orders in place as of the date of enactment of the Uruguay Round. This expanded mission will require each employee to carry an intensive workload and will involve significant internal shifting of resources. Even at peak efficiency, additional staff has become necessary to meet the requirements of this new mandate. Meeting these new responsibilities will be the Commission's most significant challenge for the next several years.

Achieving the Commission's mission requires efficient and effective use of all the agency's resources, the foremost being the agency's highly dedicated and professional staff. Although budgetary constraints have forced the Commission to significantly reduce its staff in recent years, the Commission has streamlined its operations and maximized efficiency through the use of office automation technology, such as electronic imaging and desktop retrieval of trade data. The Commission received an appropriation of \$ 41.2 million for FY 1998, and requested an appropriation of \$ 45.5 million for FY 1999.

The Commission is committed to the strategic planning process. Through the Strategic Plan, the agency has learned to articulate its goals and values and focus on them more clearly. To implement the Strategic Plan, the Commission intends to communicate the Plan's goals to all agency employees, and make clear to managers and staff the importance of achieving those goals. The process has also brought the agency into closer touch with the concerns of its customers and stakeholders and enabled the Commission to learn from their perspectives and to take advantage of the planning experiences of other agencies. The Commission has placed this Strategic Plan on its World Wide Web site, and welcomes comments on the Plan. In the years ahead, the Commission will continue to refine the Plan in order to adapt to changing circumstances. The planning process will allow the Commission to maintain and enhance its unique expertise, to continue to administer import-remedy laws fairly and objectively in new areas, and to contribute to the development and implementation of U.S. trade policy.

## **Mission Statement**

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The mission of the Commission is twofold: Administer U.S. trade remedy laws in a fair and objective manner; and provide the President, USTR, and the Congress with independent, quality advice and information on matters of international trade and competitiveness.

In so doing, the Commission contributes to the development and implementation of sound and informed U.S. trade policy.

## **Vision Statement of the United States International Trade Commission**

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The role of international trade in the U.S. economy has expanded and, thus, the mission of the Commission has become increasingly important to the economic well-being of the country as a whole. With this direction continuing, the Commission recognizes the importance of striving for excellence in all aspects of its mission. It is dedicated to objectivity, timeliness, and continual improvement in support of its customers.

Bipartisan and independent, the Commission is uniquely placed to administer important U.S. trade laws in a fair and impartial manner. The Commission is committed to the objective administration of the laws under its authority and is dedicated to improving the clarity and analytical and legal excellence of its decisions.

Likewise, the Commission's bipartisan and independent structure positions it to provide objective advice and information to the President, USTR, Congress, and the private sector. The Commission is committed to serving as the key national resource on international trade matters through its industry, economic, and regional expertise. The Commission anticipates that the need for this expertise will expand; thus, it envisions enhancing its ability to assess a wide range of emerging trade issues.

## **Goals and objectives**

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The Commission fulfills its mission by establishing long-term goals and objectives for all of its major functions and operations. The five major operations that serve the Commission's external customers are –

- Import injury investigations
- Intellectual property-based investigations
- Research

- Trade information services
- Trade policy support

All of these operations define the output of the Commission, emphasizing the benefits that the Commission provides in facilitating an open trading system based on rule of law and economic self-interest. Within each operation, specific critical success indicators and strategic goals are identified.

The Commission recognizes that its human capital is its most valuable asset. Thus, another goal of the Commission is to tailor internal practices to support, train, and retain highly motivated employees.

In accordance with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act, the Commission plans to develop means to accept electronic filings and signatures by 2003. This new goal will affect virtually every operation in the Strategic Plan.

# OPERATION NO. 1:

## Goals and Objectives for Import Injury Investigations

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The Commission will produce high-quality, well-reasoned determinations in a variety of import injury investigations, primarily antidumping and countervailing duty (AD/CVD) investigations concerning the effects of unfairly traded imports on a U.S. industry. The investigations will be conducted fairly and equitably and will provide interested parties with meaningful opportunities to participate in and influence the investigative proceedings. The determinations issued by the Commission will conform to applicable deadlines and required procedures. Starting in 1998, the Commission has faced a substantial increase in workload resulting from the requirement, imposed by the Uruguay Round implementing legislation, to review existing AD/CVD orders. The Commission will maintain high standards in the conduct of initial AD/CVD investigations while handling the increased workload generated by these five-year (“sunset”) reviews. The Commission will successfully defend its AD/CVD determinations in litigation before courts and dispute resolution panels.

The success of the Commission’s import injury investigations will be determined in part by the following critical success indicators and strategic goals:

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS	STRATEGIC GOALS
1. Public availability via electronic and other means of materials describing and explaining process	a. Periodically update existing handbooks and other materials, and evaluate need for and as necessary develop new materials
2. Fair procedures that are equitably implemented	a. Obtain feedback from users of the process on investigative procedures  b. Make available administrative protective order material and public versions of reports in accordance with established guidelines, modified as appropriate based on user feedback
3. Development of an appropriate investigative record	a. Obtain feedback from Commissioners on the availability of data  b. Circulate draft staff reports to the investigative team for review; draft legal issues memoranda and draft opinions to the team for comment on factual accuracy and confidentiality

4. Timely actions	a. Meet administrative deadlines for staff reports, legal issues memoranda, and draft opinions; meet statutory deadlines for determinations
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In order to accomplish its program goals, the Commission will employ general strategies such as:

- Completing procedural arrangements, coordinating with the Commerce Department, providing additional resources, and shifting currently available resources needed to conduct the five-year (“sunset”) AD/CVD reviews mandated by Uruguay Round legislation.
- Developing a plan for regular assessment of the conduct of investigations based in part on feedback from investigative participants.
- Developing a plan to improve processes, based where appropriate on user feedback, and encourage innovation in overcoming obstacles and increasing efficiency.
- Regularly assessing the procedural requirements for investigations to identify costs incurred by the Commission and private litigants that could be reduced consistent with the provision of a fair and thorough investigative process.
- Providing effective research tools to the Commission staff such as document imaging and Internet access, including appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, and library resources.
- Assessing at regular intervals whether (1) particular functions not now performed should be initiated and (2) current functions being performed should be retained, decreased, or eliminated on the basis of cost effectiveness to the agency and the public.

# OPERATION NO. 2:

## Goals and Objectives for Intellectual Property-Based Import Investigations

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The Commission adjudicates complaints brought by domestic industries under section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 that allege infringement of U.S. intellectual property rights and other unfair methods of competition by imported goods. The Commission will produce high-quality, detailed analyses of complex legal and technical subject matter. These investigations are conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, which affords the parties the opportunity to conduct discovery, present evidence, and make legal arguments before the Administrative Law Judges and the Commission. The procedures also protect the public interest and provide the parties with expedited determinations. The Commission will successfully defend these determinations during judicial appeals.

The success of the Commission in intellectual property-based import investigations will be determined in part by the following critical success indicators and strategic goals:

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS	STRATEGIC GOALS
1. Expeditious proceedings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Meet statutory and key administrative deadlines</li><li>b. Conclude investigations in time frames consistent with the URAA</li><li>c. Reduce average time to conclude ancillary proceedings</li></ul>
2. Effective relief when violations of section 337 are found and relief is warranted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Address reports of violations of remedial orders in a timely manner</li><li>b. Establish mechanisms to insure the Commission has information regarding effectiveness of orders and uses that information to further enforcement objectives</li></ul>
3. Availability of information pertaining to section 337 proceedings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Increase information accessible to the public via electronic and other means</li></ul>

To accomplish its program goals, the Commission will employ general strategies such as:

- Examining at regular intervals the length of Section 337 investigations and related ancillary proceedings and assessing whether time frames can be shortened consistent with the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act and the provision of a fair and equitable investigational and decisional process.
- Obtaining input from complainants who prevailed in Section 337 investigations regarding the effectiveness of remedial orders.
- Assessing the feasibility of making additional materials relating to Section 337 decisions and proceedings available to the public on the Internet.
- Providing effective litigation support tools to Commission staff, such as document imaging, and continuously monitoring and, when necessary, rebalancing caseloads, in order to produce the best work product with the available technical and human resources.
- Providing specialized training in order to maintain and improve the skills of personnel involved in Section 337 investigations.
- Assessing at regular intervals whether (1) particular functions not now performed should be initiated and (2) current functions being performed should be retained, decreased, or eliminated on the basis of cost effectiveness to the agency and the public.



# OPERATION NO. 3:

## Goals and Objectives for Research Program

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The Commission contributes to the public debate on issues relating to U.S. international trade and competitiveness through an extensive research program. The Commission's long-range goals are to be a national resource of industry, economic, and regional trade experts for the nation's policymakers and to enhance its position as a recognized leader in independent research and analysis through objective and timely reports. The Commission's research program consists of its probable economic effects investigations under section 131 of the Tariff Act of 1930; analysis of trade and competitiveness issues under section 332; and an expanded role as a "think tank" on international trade, taking the initiative to explore and provide independent assessments on a wide range of emerging trade issues. In recent years, the importance to the U.S. economy and in trade negotiations of service industries (such as information, financial, and intellectual property services, software, and telecommunications) has increased dramatically, and is expected to continue to increase in the future given the importance of these issues to the U.S. economy and in trade negotiations. The expertise developed in the Commission's research program is also used in providing technical assistance on industry and trade to the general public and the business trade community. This assistance is provided both informally in immediate responses to telephone inquiries and more formally through written correspondence and public addresses. Also, the agency is committed to devoting the necessary resources to such areas as service industries, non-tariff barriers, dynamic effects on trade, the consequences of regional trade agreements, intellectual property issues, and the interaction between trade and social issues.

The success of the research program will be determined in part by the following critical success indicators and strategic goals:

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS	STRATEGIC GOALS
1. Recognition of Commission research by appropriate officials in the Legislative and Executive Branches, as well as the trade policy and academic communities	a. Obtain increased use of ITC research capabilities/products by customers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Congress and USTR</li><li>• Peers</li><li>• Public</li></ul>
2. Comprehensive and readily adaptable resident industry, economic, and trade expertise	a. Institute study initiatives in emerging areas/issues
3. Timeliness	a. Complete work on or before deadlines

In order to accomplish its program goals, the Commission will employ general strategies such as:

- Improving communications with the Executive Branch and the Congress to maximize the Commission contribution to trade decisionmakers, particularly through regular contact by the Office of External Relations and pre- and post-investigative meetings.
- Seeking the knowledge and expertise of customers, other agencies, academia, and industry in the formulation of research plans and the conduct of research.
- Conducting regular assessments of research projects. The goal of these assessments is to improve the Commission's overall research contribution through exploration of new conceptual approaches; to streamline research procedures; to optimize Commission review time; and to make other changes that enhance quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Facilitating research and expanding the areas of resident expertise through specialized employee training programs in areas such as project leadership, interviewing and writing techniques, electronic database research, and report production software.
- Providing effective research tools to the Commission staff, including appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, U.S. and foreign databases, and library resources.
- Seeking opportunities to make Commission research available through wide public dissemination of reports by the most economic means available, including both electronic (e.g., Internet) and hard copy formats.
- Maintaining high quality modeling and economic expertise, and creating an environment for innovative research.
- Initiating research studies on cutting-edge trade-related issues, applying rigorous economic analysis to these issues and adding new, useful insights on them, and providing the results in highly accessible reports that add significantly to the policy dialogue.
- Assessing at regular intervals whether (1) particular functions not now performed should be initiated and (2) current functions being performed should be retained, decreased, or eliminated on the basis of cost effectiveness to the agency and the public.

# OPERATION NO. 4:

## Goals and Objectives for Trade Information Services

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The Commission maintains an extensive repository of trade data and trade expertise and provides trade information services relating to U.S. international trade and competitiveness. The trade information services program prepares technical reports and analyses in response to special requests, maintains tariff and trade databases, and provides information gathering, processing, dissemination, and support for all Commission programs. Trade information services include such activities as trade remedy assistance; library services; legislative reports; maintenance of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule; Schedule XX; U.S. Schedule of Services Commitments under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/World Trade Organization; preparation of U.S. submissions to the Integrated Database of the World Trade Organization; periodic and specifically requested reports on U.S. bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade relations; and certain other information gathering, processing, and dissemination activities. The Commission is a board member of an interagency effort to streamline the collection and dissemination of U.S. trade data and is active in interagency efforts to streamline the preparation of data for international forums.

The success of the trade information program will be determined in part by the following critical success indicators and strategic goals:

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS	STRATEGIC GOALS
1. Recognition of the Commission's technical trade/nomenclature expertise by appropriate officials in the Legislative and Executive Branches, as well as the broader trade policy and academic community	a Obtain increased use of ITC trade data and nomenclature expertise by customers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Congress and USTR</li><li>• Peers</li><li>• Public</li></ul>
2. Error-free and current information	a. Obtain feedback through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• External Relations</li><li>• Customer contacts</li></ul>

In order to accomplish its program goals, the Commission will employ general strategies such as:

- Improving the coverage and availability of information.
- Facilitating assistance by improving the areas of resident expertise.

- Providing effective research tools to the Commission staff, including appropriate hardware, software, telecommunications, and library resources.
- Encouraging the proactive development of tariff and trade data files to assist trade policymakers and negotiators.
- Improving methods of information access and dissemination, such as by increased use of the Internet, and increasing self-service and system responsiveness.
- Integrating management of information-related resources.
- Developing a plan for regular assessment of the services provided to improve processes, encourage innovation, and increase efficiency.
- Assessing at regular intervals whether (1) functions not now performed should be initiated and (2) functions being performed should be retained, decreased, eliminated, or technically improved on the basis of cost effectiveness to the agency and the public.

# OPERATION NO. 5:

## Goals and Objectives for Trade Policy Support

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The Commission is a direct and active contributor to the formulation of U.S. trade policy, providing objective input to both the Executive Branch and the Congress on the basis of the distinctive expertise of its staff. The Commission does not make trade policy, nor does its staff participate in policy decisions on any committee on which they participate. The Commission and its staff support policymakers by providing technical expertise and objective factual information on trade issues. The Commission will enhance its current role as provider of technical advice on international trade issues by actively seeking opportunities to support trade policy formulation and U.S. representation in international fora. Senior representatives of the Commission provide information and technical advice to appropriate congressional committee representatives and in interagency committees. The Commission also conducts “quick response” research and analyses for the Congress and the Executive Branch on trade issues in the form of staff-to-staff assistance, making the agency’s extensive resident expertise immediately available to key decisionmakers in the trade arena, and prepares Presidential proclamations.

The success of the Commission’s trade policy role will be determined in part by the following critical success indicators and strategic goals:

CRITICAL SUCCESS INDICATORS	STRATEGIC GOALS
1. Acceptance as a contributor of technical advice in appropriate Congressional committees, interagency committees, and organizations meeting on trade issues	a. Regularly contribute technical advice in organizations where Commission participation is appropriate
2. Peer acceptance as regular contributors to the trade policy formulation process	a. Obtain feedback from USTR/Congress/other agencies and organizations and focus group discussions

In order to accomplish its program goals, the Commission will employ general strategies such as:

- Improving communications with the Executive Branch and the Congress to maximize the Commission’s contribution to trade decisionmakers.

- Encouraging a research program that strengthens the Commission's ability to analyze emerging trade policy issues effectively and efficiently.
- Identifying committees and multilateral organizations in which Commission expertise can be best utilized and identifying staff to cover them on a regular basis.
- Encouraging the active involvement of Commission staff in interagency and congressional committee activities where appropriate.
- Facilitating the participation of Commission staff as technical advisors to U.S. delegations to meetings of multilateral organizations.
- Regularly assessing whether (1) functions not now performed should be initiated and (2) functions being performed should be retained, decreased, or eliminated on the basis of cost effectiveness to the agency and the public.

